

The Dissolution of Multilateralism, Crises and Prospects for Peace

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GLOBAL PEACE

(An International Journal of Philosophy, Peace, Education, Culture and Civilization.....)

EDITOR : DR. RAVINDRA KUMAR

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EDITORIAL

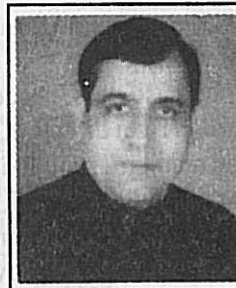
WELCOMING CHINESE STEP IN CURRENT TIBET CRISIS

The decision of the Government of the People's Republic of China to invite representatives of the Dalai Lama to start the process of dialogue with them in the course of current unrest in Tibet in which demands of protection of cultural heritage and identity of the region and restoration of political freedom of the Tibetans are nucleus, and in which according to the Spokesman of the Tibetan Government-in-exile two hundred three sons of the soil have lost their lives is without a doubt a welcoming step.

In the same manner the Dalai Lama's positive response to the invitation and sending his two representatives to Beijing for the purpose is also a welcoming step.

According to a statement issued on Friday, the 2nd May, 2008, from Dharamshala, [India], by Chhime R. Chhoekyapa, the Official Spokesman of the Tibetan Government-in-exile, "His Holiness the Dalai Lama's special envoy Lodi Gyaltzen and envoy Keland Gyaltzen will arrive in China on May 3rd for informal talks with representatives of Chinese leadership; [they] during their brief visit will take up the urgent issue of the current crisis in Tibetan areas. They will convey the Dalai Lama's deep concern about the Chinese authorities' handling of situation and provide suggestions to bring peace in the region."

For the last six decades Tibetans, who are peaceful by nature, are fighting for the existence of their cultural identity and political rights with such a mighty nation of the world which wears the mask of Communism and which believes in expansionism. Therefore, Tibetans are eagerly wishing of some positive and concrete result. But, what is the intention of Beijing behind starting this dialogue, nothing can be said with certainty at this juncture. Even then, the process of dialogue, which definitely is the first step towards resolving any small or big problem or dispute, started by the People's Republic of China for the first time officially with the Tibetan



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THE DISSOLUTION OF MULTILATERALISM, CRISES AND PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

Johannes Dragsbaek Schmidt*

The new millennium has been marked by fear and terror and a renovated dogmatic belief in the market forces. This evolution has dramatically limited the space for meaningful popular participation and severely decreased human rights not only in Europe and Asia but at the global level as well. The claim that neoliberal globalization could somehow be made to work for the benefit of poor and marginalized majorities has proved empirically, and emphatically, to be false. Moreover, despite the triumphalism rhetoric of the minority global elites, the system of global capitalism entered into a deep crisis in the late 1990s and again in 2008. This crisis in both Asia and Europe involves three dimensions and provides the context for the AEPF meeting in Beijing to call for all progressive social movements in Asia and Europe and across regions to establish alternatives and new directions for increasing both political and social rights and real popular participation in all spheres of decision-making.

First is a crisis of social polarization. The basic needs and social reproduction of a majority of humanity is linked to the expanding poverty, inequality, marginality and deprivation and in reality creating one of the prime stimuli for the degradation of human rights in political, socio-economic and ecological terms.

Second is a structural crisis of over-accumulation. The current production system cannot expand because the marginalization of a significant portion of humanity from direct productive participation, the downward pressure on wages and popular consumption worldwide, and the polarization of income, has reduced the ability of the world market to absorb world output. This is the structural underpinning to the series of crises that began in 1995 and then intensified with the Asian financial meltdown of 1997-98, and the world recession that began in 2007 and continues with haste today where a cacophony of crises in

climate, environment, food, finance and over-production is creating a systemic failure with grave consequences for democratic participation in Asia and Europe. This makes state-driven military spending and the growth of a military-industrial complex in a number of Asian and European countries an outlet for surplus and gives the current global order a frightening built-in war drive. This is why the new security state is imposing draconian laws against migrants, foreigners and close borders not only in Europe and Asia but worldwide.

Third is a crisis of legitimacy and authority. The legitimacy of the system has increasingly been called into question by millions, perhaps even billions, of people around the world, and is facing an expanded counter-hegemonic challenge.

The real causes of terror are rooted in the social sphere and the relentless power given to the market forces in the past decade. What is needed for a New World Order is what John Kenneth Gailbraith speaks of when he identifies poverty as the prime source of world disorder, requiring a continued and enlarged flow of resources from the rich countries to the poor. He also speaks of the need to expand educational opportunities in the Third World, remembering that there is no literate population that is poor and no illiterate population that is anything but poor. I tend to agree with this modest aim as one of the prerequisites of order either at the national or the international level and also a prerequisite of an orderly recognition and legitimization of international migration.

During the late 1990s the White House in Washington had been promoting a foreign policy which relied on multilateral institutions it could control, but this all changed in the late Clinton years. The top priority turned to the sole exercise of power and unilateral actions with huge increases in military equipment and

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the armed forces. The peace dividend was blown into pieces long before the world had heard about 11 September terrorism. The present Bush administration's wish is not only to preserve American military superiority, but by and large it has embarked on a unilateral and neo-imperialist policy which among other characteristics means that human rights no longer plays any significant role except for American citizens.

This means in a longer term perspective that the role of the United Nations and its

affiliates the World Bank, IMF and the Human Rights Commission are no longer important pillars in US policy and will definitely together with other formal Cold War institutions such as the European Union and NATO loose their importance while bilateralism and unilateralism denote a new era for international relations.

The real outcome and implications for peace and harmony have been cast in jeopardy and create increasing difficulties for those who support collective and unified solutions based on inter-Civilizational dialogue.

OVERTHROWING ROBERT MUGABE

Kamele "Oupa" Seane*

Can sometimes war be waged in the name of peace? Recently I traveled to South Africa to attend my late father's tombstone unveiling. Upon arrival in the country I was shocked by the visible and invisible devastation that is taking place. Life is challenging. Unemployment is high, the economy is in bad shape, the price of food and gas has gone up. There is shortage of housing, and the natural environment is also adversely affected. Because of all the above factors crime has gone up and quality of life has depreciated. It is a common thing in South Africa that while stopping at a red traffic light for someone to smash your window and try to do away with your purse or your wallet.

South Africa and other surrounding countries are in this mess because of autocrat Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and his friend President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa. Zimbabwe was once the bread basket of Africa. Zimbabwe produced enough food to feed her and other countries until Mugabe decided to take away farms from the white farmers and gave them to his black cronies. Zimbabwe's economic collapse has affected the entire region. Mbeki is guilty for not honestly stopping Mugabe from committing this crime. Furthermore, Mbeki is also guilty of allowing Mugabe to steal the elections that he lost. Mbeki should have applied diplomatic pressure and supported the recent United Nations proposed sanctions; instead he did nothing and

called it quiet diplomacy. Results are irresponsible actions of Mugabe have destroyed the entire Southern Africa. People have died. Even with the abysmal economic situation that I witnessed in South Africa life is better over there than it is in Zimbabwe. There is no food in Zimbabwe. Rogue leaders must be brought to justice. Whatever happened to Charles Taylor of Liberia must one day happen to Robert Mugabe.

Other countries that are supporting Mugabe's regime are China and Russia. We know how these two countries treat their own people a case in point Tiananmen Square and the recent invasion of Georgia. If these two countries have such a sad human rights record how can they care about Africans? The champion of civil rights, a peace hero Archbishop Desmond Tutu is one person who has been publicly vocal about the Mugabe fiasco and the suffering of Zimbabwe people. President George W. Bush has also been publicly vocal about Mugabe's dictatorship.

Sending people to war is the most difficult decision that leaders must make some time. War should come as a last resort after every aspect has been exhausted. How long is our world going to wait and sit back while Zimbabwean people die at the hands of this autocrat? Yes, military ousting Robert Mugabe from office will be saving lives and an act of peace.

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